

Dept. of Natural Resources: Help stop the spread of invasive species this summer

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MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is asking boaters to help stop the spread of invasive, nonnative plants and animals in our waters.

This Fourth of July holiday weekend, DNR staff and volunteers with [Clean Boats, Clean Waters](#) will be at boat launches statewide for their [2022 Landing Blitz](#), reminding the public of ways boaters can help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species, which pose great risks to the health of our lakes and fisheries.



Volunteers stationed at boat landings around the state will give demonstrations of the prevention steps that boaters must take before they leave the water. Boaters will receive “Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers!” boat towels. With additional assistance of grants from the Great Lakes Commission this year, Wisconsin will be able to expand its efforts to even more landings throughout the state.

Invasive species are nonnative plants, animals and diseases that cause great ecological, environmental or economic harm. Some have already been found in Wisconsin, while others pose a large risk of surviving and causing problems if they are introduced and become established here.

[Wisconsin state law prohibits the transport of aquatic invasive species.](#) It is illegal to possess, transport, transfer or introduce certain invasive species in Wisconsin without a permit. The regulations designate which species are Restricted or Prohibited based on factors including the degree of harm they may cause to people, the native ecology or the economy.

How You Can Help

Follow these steps to prevent the establishment and spread of invasives:

- **Inspect** your boat, trailer and equipment
- **Remove** all attached plants or animals
- **Drain** all water from boats, motors, livewells and other equipment
- **Never** move live fish away from a waterbody
- **Dispose** of unwanted bait in the trash
- **Buy** minnows from a Wisconsin bait dealer, and use leftover minnows only if you will be using them on that same waterbody or if no lake or river water or other fish were added to the container

Many launches around the state now have cleaning stations to make prevention even easier. Stations vary from high-tech cleaning stations in Door County to power-wash units in several northern counties to large signs set up with tools like deck brushes and grabbers.

If you have a lake organization interested in setting a station up, contact your [Regional DNR AIS Coordinator](#) or jeanne.scherer@wisc.edu.

[Visit the DNR's invasive species webpages to learn more ways to prevent invasive species from establishing in Wisconsin.](#)